

2012-109 AUDIT SCOPE AND OBJECTIVES—City of San Diego—Site Development Permitting Process

The audit by the California State Auditor will provide independently developed and verified information related to the City of San Diego's (city) development permitting process and will include, but not be limited to, the following:

1. Review and evaluate the laws, rules, and regulations significant to the audit objectives.
2. For a selection of permit applications and plans for projects of similar scope and size submitted to the city for approval since January 2010, determine the length of time from submission of the application to permit issuance to identify any unusual trends related, but not limited to, the size, type, and location (underserved versus more affluent areas) of the development project.
3. For a selection of permits of similar scope and size issued or amended since January 2010 (including the permits for the Walmart facility), evaluate the city's compliance with relevant laws and regulations by performing the following:
 - a. Determine whether the city followed the appropriate approval process (ministerial or discretionary) based on the type of permit or application approval sought.
 - b. Determine whether any amendments were made to any applications or plans that were approved using the ministerial decision-making process (e.g., did not require compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA)). For those amended applications or plans, determine whether the city followed the laws and regulations related to processing and approving any amended applications or plans.
 - c. Determine whether the city complied with relevant laws and regulations regarding any applications or plans that the city determined involved an historic resource, including a property in an historical community.
 - d. Determine whether the city complied with the laws and regulations related to public notification when processing and approving applications and plans that required compliance with CEQA or involved an historic resource.
4. Review and evaluate the city's conflict-of-interest policies and procedures to determine whether they comply with relevant laws and regulations. Further, determine whether the policies and procedures are designed to detect and prevent any conflicts of interest as well as address any that are identified. Lastly, determine whether the city has appropriately adhered to its conflict-of-interest policies and procedures for key employees who process and approve permits using the ministerial and discretionary review processes.
5. Review and assess any other issues that are significant to the city's permitting process.